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REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Office action mailed September 21, 2006. Reexamination and reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 7, 10, and 11 being the independent claims. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended, and Claims 7-9 and 11 have been withdrawn. No new matter is believed to have been added.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for finding allowable subject matter in Claims 2-4 and 10.

Specification

The Examiner alleges that the use of the trademark Inconel should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology. In response, the Applicants have amended the specification accordingly. Additionally, claim 6 has been amended to delete the trademark Inconel and to recite its generic terminology instead.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,608,349 to Greiner et al. ("Greiner"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to now recite a shield and one or more cut openings. The shield has a sidewall, a top, and an inner cavity, the sidewall has a bottom edge and a top edge, the bottom edge is configured to contact the impeller vane, and the top edge is joined with the top. The one or more cut openings extend through the shield sidewall to the shield inner cavity, are formed between the sidewall top and bottom edges, and are located a predetermined distance away from the sidewall bottom edge.

Greiner discloses an apparatus for winding coil springs wherein a plurality of spring bands extends, during the winding operation, through an inner space of a winding drum in a concentric symmetrical fashion and are each individually guided by means of corresponding guide slots peripherally disposed within the drum. See col. 2, ll. 16-23. The guide slots are formed on a bottom edge of the winding drum. See FIG. 9. However, nowhere does Greiner

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show one or more cut openings extending through the shield sidewall to the shield inner cavity, where the one or more cut openings formed between the sidewall top and bottom edges and located a predetermined distance away from the sidewall bottom edge, as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, as Greiner does not show each and every limitation of claim 1 and claim 5 that depends therefrom, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Greiner. Claim 6 depends on independent claim 1 and relies on the arguments regarding Greiner as presented above. Accordingly, as Greiner does not show each and every limitation of claim 1 and thus claim 6 that depends therefrom, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Based on the above, independent Claims 1 and 10 are patentable over the citations of record. The dependent claims are also deemed patentable for the reasons given above with respect to the independent claims and because each recite features which are patentable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

The other art of record is also not understood to disclose or suggest the inventive concept of the present invention as defined by the claims.

Hence, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

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If for some reason Applicant has not paid a sufficient fee for this response, please consider this as authorization to charge Ingrassia, Fisher & Lorenz, Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 11/22/06.

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